

[Article]

A Reading of *The Waste Land*

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5. “What the Thunder Said”

Seeing from the total perspective of *The Waste Land*, the stage has already shifted to the destruction of cities to the wandering to the desert land. This amounts to George Steiner’s understanding of the *Iliad*: “When a city is destroyed, man is compelled to wander the earth or dwell in the open fields in partial return to the manner of a beast”.¹ At the same time, this shift concurs with that from the time of oblivion to the time of thunder in Kristeva’s “time of abjection” (*Powers of Horror*, 9). The time of abjection, according to Kristeva, is double because the time of veiled infinity (of death ?) and the moment when revelation bursts forth are brought together (Parenthesis is mine). It is the moment when a flash of lightning thrusts into infinitely jettisoned time.

Now, the title of this section gives it a framework within which a series of fragmentary scenes runs. The framework is indebted to at least two stories from Greek myth and from the Bible. First, at Olympia Zeus was worshipped under the surname of Thunderbolt. He wielded the thunder and lightning as well as the rain (Frazer, 184). It goes without saying that water or rain is an essential of life. Secondly, the role of God in the Old Testament is similarly related: “On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet; and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. And Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; ...” (Exodus 19: 16) and “...when he made a decree for the rain,/and a way for the lightning of the thunder;/then he saw it and declared it; he established it, and searched it out” (Job, 28: 26-8), and the like. But there has occurred a deep change in our understanding of myth, i.e. myth has already lost its power. Therefore, the landscape here depicted by Eliot is thoroughly demythologized, and the mood is withered and exhausted, as can be seen in the phrase: “Of thunder of spring over distant mountains” and “But dry sterile thunder without rain”. In this climate, Conrad also created “the Jupiter-like Kurtz” (Knowles, 126).

Now, as a prerequisite to reading “What the Thunder said”, I would like to have recourse to Charles Taylor’s study of the development of modernity which he calls secular. Taylor’s powerful motors in his speculation are two concepts of “porous” self and “buffered” self. Each self is molded in the earlier enchanted world and in the modern disenchanting/disengaged world. In the enchanted world, religion (or “transcendence”), God or Gods, was “everywhere”, was interwoven with everything else. The enchanted world is the place in which the line between personal agency and impersonal force was not at all clearly drawn; it was fuzzy.

On the other hand, in the disenchanting world, when we function within various spheres of activity, economic, political, cultural and so on, we don’t need to make reference to God and any religious beliefs. In the pre-modern world before 1,500, defined by Taylor, meanings are not only in minds, but can reside in things, or in various kinds of extra-human but extra-cosmic subjects. The meaning exists already outside of us, prior to contact. Moreover, the meaning in things includes another power. These “charged” objects can affect not only us but other things in the world. They can affect cures, save ships from wreck, end hail and lightning, and so on. In other words, the porous self is vulnerable, to spirits, demons, cosmic forces (*A Secular Age*, 38).

By contrast, the buffered self abolishes “magical thinking, myth, fantasy and has confidence in our own powers of moral ordering. The only locus of thoughts, feelings, spiritual élan is what we call minds (30). Minds are bounded, so that these thoughts, feelings, etc., are situated “within” them. As thoughts and meanings are only in minds, there can be no “charged” objects. The buffered self takes out of the world the fears, anxieties, terrors which the porous self felt and gives its own autonomous order to its life, though those feelings hidden (repressed) in the mind amounts to the rich symbolism of which Freud later locates in the depths of the psyche (540). In a sense, this is a process of objectification, which gives the self a sense of power and control and is intensified by every victory of instrumental reason (548). Taylor calls it mind-centered disenchantment. According to Taylor, with time passing, the porous self has been replaced by the buffered self.

The rise of the buffered self has been accompanied by an interiorization; that is, not only by the Inner/outer distinction, but by the growth of various spiritual disciplines of self-exploration, the development of the modern novel, the rise of Romanticism, the ethic of authenticity (540). Privacy and intimacy gradually invade social space. So the buffered, disciplined self sees him/herself more and more as an individual. Of course, individualism is the normal fruit of human self-regard absent the illusory claims of God, the Chain of Being, or the sacred order of society (571). We moderns behave as individuals, because that’s what we naturally do when no longer held in by the old religions (571).

Moreover, the interiorization is reinforced by the immanent frame of spirituality sloughing off the transcendent. In other words, the world structures which are closed to transcendence is the “immanent frame” (557). This move not only causes our great emancipation from the old yokes of tradition but more or less characterizes our predicament in the modern West (549). The “subtraction” view of modernity, arising from the washing away of old horizons, leads to the rise of modern humanism, which is deeply connected with the death of God (572). Taylor contends, “The logic of the subtraction story is something like this: once we slough off one concern with serving God, or attending to any other transcendent reality, what we’re left with is human good, and that is what modern societies are concerned with” (572). This buffered distance to the transcendence becomes part of the complex modern-European concept of “civilization” (301).

A secular age is one in which the eclipse of all goals beyond human flourishing become conceivable (“Introduction”, 19). In other words, the age is one in which we don’t need power transcending the immanent order and are in a self-sufficing humanism. But for Taylor, the eclipse of the transcendent is identical with the loss of meaning. Taylor says, “our age suffers from a threatened loss of meaning. This malaise is specific to buffered identity, ...” (303). Thus, the issue about meaning is a central preoccupation of our age. And what we can insist with certainty is that the loss of object is anterior to the loss of meaning. When the object has ceased to exist, the meaning is merely the hallucination of meaning.

Taylor, as if he were conscious of Freud, explains, “the dawning sense in modern times that we are in a meaningless universe, that our most cherished meanings find no endorsement in the cosmos, or in the will of God, has often been described as a traumatic loss, a second and definitive expulsion from paradise” (587).

But the move from the transcendent to the immanent is not a simple way. The move is strongly resisted by Taylor’s “immanent revolt”. A need for meaning, a desire for eternity, can press us against the boundaries of the human domain (723). But the locus of death takes on a new paradigm status (726). Death offers in some sense the privileged perspective, the paradigm gathering point for life. It is possible by the paradoxical idea Taylor called immanent transcending (726). And death also can offer a way to escape the confinement of this domain. According to Taylor, death can bring out the question of meaning in its most acute form (722). People go from the search for meaning, the deepening of our sense of life through our contact with nature and art, death as a denial of the significance of love, to death as an escape from the confines, to the paramount vantage point in which life shows its meaning (726).

Now, Freud already adumbrated the above discussion of Taylor. Freud identifies the progress of spirituality with the development of human culture. One of his beliefs is that in the history of the human species something happened similar to the events in the life of the individual (*MM*, 101). According to Freud, the progress in spirituality consists in deciding against the direct sense perception in favour of the so-called higher intellectual processes — that is to say, in favour of memories, reflection, and deduction (in Taylor “subtraction”) (150). In other words, progress in spirituality and subordination of the senses are deeply concerned with the self-confidence of a person. In the context, the belief in the “omnipotence of thought” is gradually replaced with our mental faculties which can exert on the outer world by changing it (145). With this, the matriarchal structure of society was replaced by patriarchal one (145), because maternity is proved by the senses whereas paternity is a surmise based on a deduction and a premiss.

But later or sooner, paternity also is forced to be replaced by the filial. This also happens in religion. The Mosaic religion had been a Father religion; Christianity became a Son religion. The old God, the father, took second place; Christ, the Son, stood in his stead...(*MM*, 111). Freud continues, “Originally a Father religion, Christianity became a Son religion. The fate of having to displace the Father it could not escape” (175). This argument of Freud of course is at once about the historical development of monotheism and about the process by which we are excluded from both the paternal and maternal as the price of acquiring our subjective freedom. This is the fate of every son, and beyond sexual distinction, of every individual. This view is endorsed by Žižek’s assertion that Greek religion, Jewish religion and Christianity form a triad of reflection (*SOI*, 230).

With this as a background, let’s read “What the Thunder said”. The first part begins in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus was arrested and taken away to be crucified, and in the death of Christ through betrayal (Gish, 92).

After the torchlight red on sweaty faces
 After the frosty silence in the gardens
 After the agony in stony places
 The shouting and the crying
 Prison and palace and reverberation
 Of thunder of spring over distant mountains
 He who was living is now dead
 We who were living are now dying

With a little patience

The scene also is multi-tiered. And as Brooker says, many images in this passage as well as in other passages, point in too many diverse directions. Brooker further explains, “the details of this verse paragraph...point to figures outside in myth and, at the same time, to figures inside the poem in a contemporary setting” (Brooker, 175). For example, this scene partly overlaps with the subject matter of a painting by Kurtz: “The background was somber — almost black. The movement of the woman was stately, and the effect of the torchlight on the face was sinister” (*HD*, 27-8). Another source, of course, is from John xviii which reports the arrest of Christ in the garden of Gethsemane: “So Judas, procuring a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons” (Southam, 136).

In this paragraph, time’s passing is of importance. Time is not a single line but is overridden. If time is unreal, a series of future and present and past is never self-evident. In fact, there are a variety of time-series in *The Waste Land*. Here it makes for a coexistence of past and present, revaluing both in complex, unsettling ways: “He who *was* living are *now* dying/We who *were* living are *now* dying” (Italics are mine).² According to Brooker’s explanation, the opening lines suggest that Christ’s suffering in Gethsemane, his betrayal and arrest, and his trial and Crucifixion are recent events. And furthermore, since the narrator seems to have lost hope, the lines suggest that the narrator is speaking after the Crucifixion but before the resurrection (174).

Moreover, the contrast of “He” and “We” may imply that of Christ and us, comparing Christ’s death and our death. For better or worse, we, even if living in prison or in palace, can die only with the burden of ourselves. In this paragraph, color and sound and touch are all painful and intense: torchlight, agony, frosty silence, shouting, crying (Gish, 93). The reader is suspended between ‘living’ and ‘dying’ (Reeves, 85). Brooker says, “perhaps this passage should be read as an indication that salvation through sacrifice of the hero is itself dead, no longer operative in the modern world” (174).

So here is the place for us to sum up the features of Eliot’s poetic language. So far the complaint has been often made that language has been deprived of “alterity”, flattened, and emptied. In short, the constitutive, revelatory power of language is totally sidelined and ignored, or even denied (Taylor’s *A Secular Age*, 758). This is the degradation of language to an instrument. A remote cause for this phenomenon Taylor seeks in modernity: “the collapse of a sense of the eternal brings on a void, a kind of crisis” (*SA.*, 722). In this regard, Eliot says that language in a healthy state presents the

object, is so close to the object that the two are identified” (*Essays*, 327). For him, “the language which is more important to us is that which is struggling to digest and express new objects, new groups of objects, new feelings, new aspects, ...” This, in a sense, is the demand for Steiner’s “otherness” as objects. Steiner claims that language should acquire the power to posit “otherness”: the ability to gainsay or “unsay” the world, to image and speak it otherwise”.³

Under the circumstances, Eliot’s poetic language, as Taylor says, is compelled to be a subtler one with a kind of suspension or indeterminacy of ontological commitments (757). The set of reference points is not fixed. Taylor says, “the language *can* be taken in more than one sense, ranging from the fullest ontological commitment to the transcendent to the most subjective, human-, even language-centred” (757). Moreover, Taylor goes on, “this indeterminacy can serve to find a way back to the God of Abraham” (757). This indeterminacy makes possible what A.W. Moore calls the *infinitude* of meaning, whether literally, metaphorically, analogically, ironically, hyperbolically, or whatever.⁴ There the open-texturedness and versatility of meaning are created.

As Brooker points out, what is dramatized in the second paragraph beginning with the line “Here is no water but only rock” is arduous, desperate, painful climbing. And when we read the paragraph, we should notice the difference between it and one scene in Arnold’s “Empedocles on Etna”, another climbing story: — “Ah, boil up, ye vapours !/Leap and roar, thou sea of fire !” and “They (Apollo’s choir) bathe on this mountain,/In the spring by their road;/then on to Olympus,/Their endless abode”.⁵ In the poem, Mt. Etna is still alive and boiling up, while the mountain in “What the Thunder said” is dead: “Dead mountain mouth of carious teeth that cannot spit/Here one can neither stand nor lie nor sit”. In “Empedocles on Etna”, there is the spring by the road, and Empedocles, not only “the banished citizen” but also “a wanderer from of old”, was able to take a rest on the way to the peak, and finally to become alone. Meanwhile in “What the Thunder said”, the landscape is more infertile: “here is no water”. But even Arnold’s Empedocles, who longed for something irrevocably lost, had already been infected by the alienation from nature: “Oh, that I could glow like this mountain !” It partly was the cost of his Socratism that is bent on the extermination of myth. For Eliot, it is more serious that not only the gods of Greek myth but Jahve as a volcano-god have already died (Freud’s *Moses and Monotheism*, 55).

Now, it is well known that, in the lines 322-94, three themes can be specified: the journey to Emmaus; the approach to the Chapel Perilous; the decay of Eastern Europe (Kermode, 105). And, the Garden of Gethsemane, then, who are sweaty faces? If lines 322-28, as Kermode notes, allude to events from the betrayal of Christ to his death, are they the disciples? They hesitate to pray with

Jesus, when he went into the garden to pray. In any case, we cannot identify who they are. But anyone (i.e. the people living in prison and palace) can never evade the agonies that are shouted and cried (i.e. a versification of various agonies). The world is full of agony. In the predicament, we scarcely get “a hint of possible renewal”: “reverberation/Of thunder of spring over distant mountains”. Things go back and forth.

In our secular times, the old myths and legends have been eroded: Adonis and Osiris and Orpheus were dead. Christ also is dead: “He who was living is now dead”. Gish says, “the death of Christ through betrayal, which, according to the Christian story, symbolically functions for the death of all” (92-3). The absolute finality of death prevails over everything without exception. As Reeves comments, we, in reading this passage, are suspended between ‘living’ and ‘dying’, between hopefulness and hopelessness. In such a situation, can we truly see the possibility that the restoration of Christ, like that of the pagan fertility gods, carries potential salvation for all? Unfortunately, in *The Waste Land*, the possibility is never revealed on a full scale. In the former chapter, the death of Adonis or Phlebas is determined.

Here is no water but only rock
Rock and no water and the sandy road
The road winding above among the mountains
Which are mountains of rock without water
If there were only water amongst the rock
Amongst the rock one cannot stop or think
Seat is dry and feet are in the sand
If there were only water amongst the rock
Dead mountain mouth of carious teeth that cannot spit
Here one can neither stand nor lie nor sit
There is not even silence in the mountains
But dry sterile thunder without rain
There is not even solitude in the mountains
But red sullen faces sneer and snarl
From doors of mudcracked houses
If there were water
And no rock

If there were rock
 And also water
 And water
 A spring
 A pool among the rock
 If there were the sound of water only
 Not the cicada
 And dry grass singing
 But sound of water over a rock
 Where the hermit-thrush sings in the pine trees
 Drip drop drip drop drop drop drop
 But there is no water

What we have here is the place of wilderness. It is best expressed by the phrase of “a God-forsaken wilderness” in *Heart of Darkness* (Knowles, 15). “Rock without water” signifies the fertility of the land in the way of the lack of relation which objects and objects naturally have. Here space (rock) is only a container, indifferent to what fills it (water), which is expressed with the repetition of the word “amongst”. In other words, any correlation between “rock” and “water” cannot be established. Thus, this scene is an emblem of a dissociation of segments of “modern space” from what happens to be filling them (Taylor, 58). The dissociation affects the narrator’s sense and imagination. All things in this scene are like hallucinations breaking the connection between representation and reality. As for Bradley, for Eliot “the superficies are the world” (*Essays*, 156), but once cleft, the two can be separated to infinity.

What we can see here is the juxtaposition or collision of the opposites, reality and fantasy, as we see in Duchamp’s works (Brooker explains “What the Thunder Said” with the aid of cubism). For “this bizarre mixture of realism and fantasy subverting all rationality”, the literary way of juxtaposition is effective. Eliot claims, “words perpetually juxtaposed in new and sudden combinations, meanings perpetually *ingeschachtelt* into meanings, which evidences a very high development of the senses,…” (*Essays*, 209). When two heterogeneous things are combined by juxtaposition, new meanings are generated. And since radical juxtaposition (“the collage principle”), as Steiner says, is the representative device in modernism, this is a common method between painting and poetry (*After Babel*, 490). As for painting, collage juxtaposes “real” items with painted or dreamed images. By

undermining the difference between painting and other art genres, Duchamp does this.

Likewise, in this paragraph, the juxtaposition of what is and what can be so perplexes our ears as that of visceral and mechanic form in Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* does our eyes. Reeves points out that it is a new sound in English poetry—the lines do not move with suppleness; they toil stiffly on (86). Sontag asserts, "If hedonism means sustaining the old ways in which we have found pleasure in art..., then the new art is anti-hedonism" (*Against Interpretation*, 302). Seen from the perspective, Eliot's poetic diction here is anti-hedonism, as Duchamp's work is so. Next come the lines: "But red sullen faces sneer and snarl/from doors mudcracked houses/If there were water." This scene reminds us of the event that Christ ended his days amid the jeers and taunts of his enemies.

Taylor says, "wilderness reflected not just incompleteness but the Fall, not just a further agenda in God's plan, but an opposition to it" (336). In other words, wilderness is also the abode of dangerous forces; of beasts, of course, but also of the bestiality that they incarnate; hence the place of devils and malign spirits (336). This is well phrased by Conrad again: "I've seen the devil of violence, and the devil of greed, and devil of hot desire; but by all the stars these were strong, lusty, red-eyed devils that swayed and drove men — men, I tell you" (*HD*, 19-20). "Red-eyed" and "red sullen faces" are suitable for demons. We cannot bear the experience of horror. So we need to shut it out. We need to shut demons out, to some degree, for the sake of a minimum equilibrium (Taylor, 769). The primitive and shabby houses made of slime or clay would be the symbol of our rudimentary experience.

"Drip drop drip drop drop drop drop" means the endless fall into the dark abyss of time and space. In the long run, this is the horror of the effortless journey which leads to the empty land" in *Murder in the Cathedral*.

Numb the hand and dry the eyelid,
Still the horror, but more horror
Than when tearing in the belly.

Still the horror, but more horror
Than when twisting in the fingers,
Than when splitting in the skull.

More than footfall in the passage,
More than shadow in the doorway,
More than fury in the hall.

The agents of hell disappear, the human, they shrink and dissolve
Into dust on the wind, forgotten, unmemorable; only is here
The white flat face of Death, God's silent servant,
And behind the face of Death the Judgement
And behind the Judgement the Void, more horrid than active
shapes of hell;
Emptiness, absence, separation from God;
The horror of the effortless journey, to the empty land
Which is no land, only emptiness, absence, the Void,
Where those who were men can no longer turn the mind
To distraction, delusion, escape into dream, pretence,
Where the soul is no longer deceived, for there are no objects, no tones,...(272).

To consider from the context of the above part, the cicada, dry grass, and the hermit thrush all allude to “the horror of the effortless journey, to the empty land”. But the journey to/across the ruined land is transmuted into the journey to Emmaus. Here also a double meaning works: the desert at a distance from cultivated soil at the same time is the place where one can find God (Taylor, 336).

The lines 331-58 called “water-dripping song” is a deformed hermit-thrush song.

Who is the third who walks always beside you ?
When I count, there are only you and I together
But when I look ahead up the white road
There is always another one walking beside you
Gliding wrapt in a brown mantle, hooded
I do not know whether a man or a woman
—— But who is that on the other side of you ?

This scene, as is well known, is built on the Emmaus journey in Luke 24: 3-31. And it is made

delusive, by connecting with the account of one of the Antarctic expeditions. The third person who appeared there is portrayed during the scene as one who nobody knows. The image of “another one” will serve Žižek’s idea that Christ is “the man without properties” (*The Puppet and the Dwarf*, 80). The narrator says, “I do not know whether a man or a woman”. If we further explain this line by means of Žižek’s account, it would be as follows, “Christ is not ‘sublime’ in the sense of an ‘object elevated to the dignity of a Thing’, he is not a stand-in for the impossible Thing-God; he is, rather, ‘the Thing itself’, or, more accurately, ‘the thing itself’ is nothing but the rupture/gap which makes Christ not fully human” (80). Therefore, the image of Christ here cannot have any positive content.

Žižek goes on to argue, “If, then, as Lacan put it, Gods are of the Real, the Christian Trinity also has to be read through the lenses of this Trinity of the Real: God the father is the “real Real” of the violent primordial Thing; God the Son is the “imaginary Real” of pure *Schein*, the “almost nothing” which the sublime shines through his miserable body; the Holy Ghost is he “the symbolic Real” of the community of believers” (*On Belief*, 82-3). For Lacan, *das Ding* is that which he calls the beyond-of-the-signified, that is, the primordial lost object/Void (VII, 65). This Void is the Void of/as the impossible/real Thing. Then, God, as the real Real, is the being that opens up the space for free people he created in HIS OWN lack/void/gap (Žižek, 146).

On this point, Alain Badiou agrees with Žižek, “Jesus is resurrected; nothing else matters, so that Jesus becomes like an anonymous variable, a ‘someone’ devoid of predicative traits, entirely absorbed by his resurrection!”⁶ Here Jesus Christ would be anonymous just as God in the Old Testament is shown as ‘moving among’ the Israelites but as can never be encountered ‘face to face’. For Badiou, the pure event is reducible to this: Jesus died on the cross and resurrected. And this event is “grace” (*khalis*) (63). Without grace, man would be merely an abstraction. For Žižek also, the Event is a pure-empty sign, and we have to work to generate its meaning. But the encounter with the Real as impossible, as it is, is therefore always missed (*PD*, 160). To make it possible is not through a moment of Bradley’s “Absolute” as a philosophical truth but through Jesus Christ as the pure event (Badiou, 48). Then the variable, as we shall later touch on, becomes Eliot’s “objective correlative” or Newman’s “object correlative”, a mode of which is “to bind together all points of view in one” (*Knowledge and Experience*, 163). Together with this, the divided subject and as its symptom the “dissociation of sensibility” could be restored in those entirety, because the actual identity of idea and existence is realized there.

Along this line, Žižek says, “*When I, a human being, experience myself as cut off from God, at that very moment of the utmost abjection, I am absolutely close to God, since I find myself in the position*

of the abandoned Christ (Italics are Žižek's)" (*On Belief*, 146). Moreover, Kristeva doesn't forget to add that Christ alone is a body without sin (120). She remarks, "The heterogeneity of Christ, Son of Man and God, resorbs and cleanses the demoniacal. Such heterogeneity does not cease revealing the moral and symbolic existence of infamy; nevertheless, as it is communicated to the sinner by means of his very being, it saves him from the abject" (122).

What is that sound high in the air
 Murmur of maternal lamentation
 Who are those hooded hordes swarming
 Over endless plains, stumbling in cracked earth
 Ringed by the flat horizon only
 What is the city over the mountains
 Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air
 Falling towers
 Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
 Vienna London
 Unreal

For Lacan, *das Ding* is "the beyond-of-the-signified" and at the same time the mother as the pre-historic Other that it is impossible to forget (VII, 87-8). Lacan argues, "What we find in the incest law is located as such at the level of the unconscious in relation to *das Ding*, the Thing. The desire for the mother cannot be satisfied because it is the end, the terminal point, the abolition of the whole world of demand, which is the one that at its deepest level structures man's consciousness" (82). As the *impossible maternal* (italic are mine) Real Thing is prohibited by the symbolic Law, we can never return there. This, as I said before, is known as the law of the prohibition of incest.

The lines "What is the sound high in the air/murmur of maternal lamentation" to the utmost eludes our grasp, is at a distance from us. Would not the lines suggest that the prehistoric or preconscious stage or being laments the history of Europe? In any case, the prehistoric is out of our reach. And if "those hooded hordes" are women, perhaps nomadic and forlorn, their numberless laments are murmured here. But their laments can never be healed, just as Coriolanus' death did not soothe the grief of mothers whose sons were killed by him. And the narrator can never feel intimacy with and is estranged from this landscape. Our sight is confused. Thus, the lines carry some of the narrator's

ambivalent feelings toward the maternal. In addition, Brooker's search for the unification of Bradley's "immediate experience" and J. Piaget's "infancy" would be impossible without the presumption of the prehistoric stage (206-22).

The phrase, "Over endless plains, stumbling in cracked earth/Ringed by the flat horizon only", signifies that there are cracks ("rupture" in Žižek's terminology) within the circumference of our knowledge and action. Space is not flat but multi-dimensional and unsolid. It is "endless" and at the same time "ringed", i.e. circumscribed. Perhaps the narrator would feel the world as "a limited whole" in that "space is a relation between terms, which can never be found" (*Appearance and Reality*, 32). Brooker says, "Forward, backward, sideways, upward, downward — all spatial directions fail,..." (185). But time, Brooker goes on, still remains a persistent dimension of reference in the sounds of clocks and singing voices (185). And these all also are conveyed from a distance. Moreover, the effect of the impasse the lines give is heightened by the next lines, "What is the city over the mountains/Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air". Not only the city but everything, as was incorporated in Tiresias, is in liminal hour (in the violet air) between destruction and creation, death and life. Gish comments, "The desert land merges with the mountains and cities of Europe in a scene of general destruction and lamentation. London is the last in a series of cities doomed to be destroyed, and the closure on "Unreal" brings back the city of 'The Burial of the Dead'" (95).

A woman drew her long black hair out tight
And fiddled whisper music on those strings
And bats with baby faces in the violet light
Whistled, and beat their wings
And crawled head downward down a blackened wall
And upside down in air were towers
Tolling reminiscent bells, that kept the hours
And voices singing out of empty cisterns and
exhausted wells.

According to Southam, "the hair" is both a symbol of fertility and an object of sacrifice to the fertility god (139). To push it further, this idea may lead to Frazer's idea that to have a part of something (hair) in one's (a woman's) power is to have the whole. But "her long black hair" already loses its vitality and even wears an ominous hue. Kermode makes a comment on the image, "this phantasma-

gorical interlude owes something to Surrealism and to the painter Hieronymus Bosch (106). Here also, into “a woman” many figures are compressed: the hyacinth girl, the typist, and a woman form an overlapping picture of “the cubistic woman” in Brooker’s terms (182).

Needless to say, they are variants of Tiresias who composes a one-many relation in *The Waste Land*. In this relation, Tiresias as an imaginary object acquires reality, so that it, like Becky Sharp in *Vanity Fair*, can be “the identical reference of several points of view” (*Knowledge and Experience*, 126). In other words, Tiresias, as Kermode’s explanatory notes show, is “the point of view from which the exemplars of waste-land degeneracy are seen to meet” (103). Mediated by Tiresias, points of view become interchangeable between the characters, so that the subjective-objective gap can be straddled. Here looms up a possibility that isolated souls can communicate with each other, though in the complicity of degeneracy.

No point of view can be self-sufficient. That is, every point of view could be otherwise. Eliot says, “for the life of a soul does not consist in the contemplation of one consistent world but in the painful task unifying (to a greater or less extent) jarring and incompatible ones, and passing, when possible, from two or more discordant viewpoints to a higher which shall somehow include and transmute them” (148). Then, Tiresias is a dummy dimly prefiguring the higher. In the terms of the double function of “objective correlative”, Tiresias lives on the plane of appearance concealing reality, whereas Christ does on the plane of reality as the negation of appearance. In Ronen’s phrase, the Real cannot be articulated except through the displacements imposed by the symptom (*Representing the Real*, 119).

Now, Kermode goes on, “It (the interlude) continues the theme of apocalyptic terror and looks forward to the horrors that test the knight at the Chapel Perilous” (parentheses are mine). From Kermode’s above argument, we cannot know which work of Bosch sheds on this scene. But among his works bound up with the sense of horror, *Death and the Miser* can be most considered. In the work, a woman with long black hair sits up on the death bed. And from behind the door, Death stares at her. Therefore, the effect the painting exerts on this scene is opposed to that of the fertility symbol. Death overshadows the whole of the scene. The surreal episodes still continue, but faint hopes for salvation are woven into them: “Tolling reminiscent bells, that kept the hours” and “the grass is singing/Over the tumbled graves”.

Next, if “fiddle” also alludes to the poet, “bats with baby faces” may be the manifestations of a disfigured Icarus or poet, or Eliot himself. Here the motif of the necessary limitations of the human word is caricatured. G. Steiner says, “Being, in the nature of his craft, a reacher, the poet must

guard against becoming, in the Faustian term, an overreacher” (*Language and Silence*, 58). That is, the poet must know when to draw back lest he be consumed, Icarus-like, by the terrible nearness of a greater making, of a *Logos* incommensurable with his own. Steiner sees the same in a poet (Orpheus ?) who is racked on his own harp in the triptych of Hieronymus Bosch’s *The Garden of Earthly Delights*. The line “And upside down in air were towers”, corresponding with the line “London Bridge is falling down falling down falling down”, represents the fall of all human enterprises as we, including the poet, try to understand the world.

Moreover, the image of “towers” implicitly foreshows the under-cited phrase from Thomas Kyd’s *Spanish Tragedy*. For Eliot, Thomas Kyd was by no means a despicable versifier but an innovator of language (*Essays*, 122). The central theme of *Spanish Tragedy* is essentially revenge. An additional theme is language. We can see Hieronimos’ view of it in his speech. After Hieronimos, knight marshal of Spain, wrote a play within a play, through which the actual revenge takes place, he says, “Why so, now shall I see the fall of Babilon,/Wrought by the heavens in this confusion”.⁷ In the play, each one of the actors must act his part in unknown languages, “sundry languages”, so that they cannot understand each other in confusion. His contrivance was to raise the same confusion that causes the fall of Babylon in the Bible. In the process, he tries to unfold what is true of his son’s, Horatio’s, death. Through a chain of revenges in the conflict between Spain and Portugal, Hieronimo passionately pursues what justice is, but he ironically committed himself to a series of revenges.

Seen from this context, the “towers” of “What the Thunder said” have layers of meaning. They can refer to all the followings: first, “Downe by the dale that flowes with purple gore,/a firie Tower, there sits a judge” (King of Spain), which Hieronimo saw in his madness (83). In the scene, he begins to distrust justice itself, and his tragic end is already announced. Secondly the towers which, when the Tower card in The Tarot pack is set at the wrong position for fortune telling, would be struck by lightning, and finally that of Babel: “Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth” (Genesis, 11-9).

And another undertone for “down” resounds from the scene that Jsabella, Hieronimo’s wife, with a weapon, cuts down the Arbour standing in the garden where her son was killed: “Downe with these branches and these loathsome bowes,/Of this vnfortunate and fatall pine./Downe with them Jsabella, rent them vp,/And burne the roots from whence the rest sprung” (116). In the end Jsabella is urged by subversive drive to stab herself. Thus, in *The Spanish Tragedy*, we come to hear many-times rep-

etitions of the sound “down”. In any case, the two scenes here stress that all the established languages, social institutions and facilities, and conventional ideas fall down and dry up.

In Richard Strauss’s opera *Salome*, according to Kermode, John the Baptist sings out of the cistern in which he is imprisoned. Further, Kermode, associating the lines 367-77 with the Russian Revolution, supposes that Eliot might have had in mind a prophecy that one sign of the end would be the movement westward of eastern hordes (106). These matters Eliot draws in perspective, so that the landscape is at once contracted and magnified. Further, by his dazzling craftsmanship, many shadows are compressed into these scenes.

In this decayed hole among the mountains
 In the faint moonlight, the grass is singing
 Over the tumbled graves, about the chapel
 There is the empty chapel, only the wind’s home.
 It has no windows, and the door swings,
 Dry bones can harm no one.
 Only a cock stood on the rooftree
 Co co rico co co rico
 In a flash of lightning. Then a damp gust
 Bringing rain

For one thing related to this bleak scene, Jessie Weston points out the close connection between the Perilous Chapel and Perilous Cemetery which is surrounded by the ghosts of knights slain in the forest and buried in unconsecrated ground (*From Ritual to Romance*, 178). In the Grail romances, journey to the Chapel Perilous, as Southam says, is an initiation ceremony. But in the empty chapel (“the draughty church” in *Burnt Norton*), there are no macabre furnishings of the mythical chapel, altar, candle, holy water, and also there doesn’t appear the Black Hand of the Devil to test the courage of the initiate, e.g. Perceval.

Forsaken “by horrors to deter the seeker” (Southam, 140), the empty chapel cannot threaten anybody who approaches it. It is what the line “Dry bones can harm no one” means. After all, the empty chapel is “only the wind home” and only husks without kernel. Behind the husk, there is no mystery, no hidden true content. This exactly corresponds with the awareness that the core of our subjectivity is a void filled in by appearances (Žižek, *PD*, 152). The Grail, once a living force, and

its romances are lost. About this scene, Brooker says, “Both good and evil, both comforting and terrifying presences have been swept away in favor of dry bones, history’s and myth’s only legacy” (186). This interpretation would be appropriate, but whether “the burial of the dead”, Brooker says, is complete, is unknown to me. It may still remain incomplete.

The lines “Only a cock stood on the roof-tree/Co co rico co co rico”, as have often been noted, can be traced to two sources. One is Peter’s denial of acquaintance with Christ in St. Matthew, 26: 75, “And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly”. Another is the scene that the ghost of Hamlet’s father disappears at the call of the cock as ‘trumpet of morn’ (Act 1, sc.1). In either story, cock’s crow signals dawn or the beginning of something: “In a flash of lightning. Then a damp gust/Bringing rain”. Thus, the first part of “What the Thunder Said” is closed with “the death” of modern Europe and the sign of restoration.

At the beginning of the second part, the eye of the narrator is directed to the oriental landscape “Ganga was sunken, and the limp leaves/Waited for rain, while the black clouds/gathered far distant, over Himavant”. Brooker says, “This new location, India, is also divided into distances and perspectives. The clouds are ‘far distant, over Himavant’, and the reader seems to be ‘placed’ in a position near the river in the silent jungle” (189). And the distance between the clouds and the narrator is equal to that between an authoritative moral voice and mankind.

Needless to say, Ganga is the Ganges, the sacred river of India, and Himavant is holy mountain in the Himalayas. The poem now moves outside of Western culture, to India and to the fable of the thunder god Prajapati (Brooker, 187). In *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* 1.3.26 the following phrase can be seen:

Lead Us From the Unreal To the Real,
Lead Us From Darkness To Light,
Lead Us From Death to Immortality,
Let There Be Peace Peace Peace.

The stream of this thought from the negative to the affirmative is no doubt reflected in the following passages.

Ganga was sunken, and the limp leaves

Waited for rain, while the black clouds
 Gathered far distant, over Himavant.
 The jungle crouched, humped in silence.
 Then spoke the thunder
 DA
Datta: what have we given ?
 My friend, blood shaking my heart
 The awful daring of a moment's surrender
 Which an age of prudence can never retract
 By this, and this only, we have existed
 Which is not to be found in our obituaries
 Or in memories draped by the beneficent spider
 Or under seals broken by the lean solicitor
 In our empty rooms

For this part, Eliot, I think, would have chosen *the Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad* from many *Upanishads* partly because it uses more psychological arguments and partly because it has something close to the Christian idea of “Trinity”.⁸ A basic idea in the Upanishad is that this universe is a trinity and this is made of name, form, action(127). Those three are unified by Atman meaning the Spirit of life, that is, Atman, although one, is those three. According to Kermode’s notes, “gods, demons, and men ask the Creator to speak to them; he replies ‘Da’ to each group, and each interprets it differently, using the three Sanskrit words employed in the following lines (402, 412, 419): ‘give’, ‘sympathize’, ‘control’”. These words are three disciplines for action, originally began with the pupils’ misunderstanding of their master. This style of thought may be reflected on the last part of “What the Thunder said”. The part is comprised of three items. We can see this in three-times repetitions of “DA” (the voice of the thunder), of “Shantih” (Peace), and of “falling down”. According to Juan Mascaró, the Sanskrit word *Upanishad*, *Upa-ni-shad*, would mean a sitting, an instruction, the sitting at the feet of a master. Mascaró says, “the whole Sermon on the Mount might be considered an *Upanishad*” (*The Upanishads*, 7). Therefore, with this in mind, we can also read this part.

“Ganga”, “the limp leaves” and “the jungle”, all these are just before dried up. Then “spoke the thunder”. But Brooker remarks, “The first and most important point about the thunder is that it does not say anything, and further, it does not mean anything” (189). Reeves goes further, “‘DA’ has

undergone much scrutiny, but the opposed responses it has inspired confirm the inscrutability” (90). In other words, “DA” is an empty signification. That is, it means that the transcendental irrepresentable Other, the God of Beyond in Judaism, no longer exists (Žižek, *On Belief*, 89). It is only by and for “The awful daring of a moment’s surrender” that we have existed, which an age of prudence never understands. Is this the moment of love or faith? Gish remarks that the account of a moment’s surrender is not specific. And Reeves here sees two opposed attitudes, straining at each other: diminution and intensification, enslavement and freedom, and damnation and redemption and says, “Hence ‘The awful daring of a moment’s surrender’ is inscrutably Janus-faced. ‘Awful’ is a word that looks both ways” (91). Our real life “is not to be found” anywhere, not even in our obituaries, in memories woven after death, in a will, of which seals are broken by the lean solicitor after the death of the owner.

DA

Dayadhvam: I have heard the key
Turn in the door once and turn once only
We think of the key, each in his prison
Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison
Only at nightfall, aethereal rumours
Revive for a moment a broken Coriolanus

Da

Damayata: The boat responded
Gaily, to the hand expert with sail and oar
The sea was calm, your heart would have responded
Gaily, when invited, beating obedient
To controlling hands

About the image of key, Eliot’s note refers to Dante, *Inferno*, XXXIII. 46: “and below I heard the outlet of the horrible tower locked up: whereat I looked into the faces of my sons, without uttering a word”. The words are spoken by Count Ugolino, who, surrendering to starvation, devoured the corpses of his children when in captivity. This association with Ugolino evokes the existence of earlier figures in the poem: Marie surrendered to an irreversible descent in childhood and the hyacinth girl’s lover surrendered to a passionate consummation (Brooker, 191). “His prison” not only is the

doleful prison in which Ugolino was shut up but the metaphor of closed self. But a contradiction is manifested here: the more we want to liberate ourselves from the prison, the more we are trapped in it. Once we are enclosed in the self, we are doomed to go round in it. The purport is of a piece with Bradley's phrase, "my experience falls within my own circle, a circle closed on the outside". Hence, it is difficult for us to get out of it and to share true sympathy with others. What is worse, we are also inhibited to return to the primordial stage before the subject emerges through entering the symbolic order.

Moreover, as Eliot's note shows, the influence of Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* is again attested here. One key image of the drama is "prison" as the metaphor of our being excluded from the outer world and being enclosed in the body, as the opening of the tragedy shows: "When this eternall substance of my soule,/Did liue imprisoned in my wanton flesh:/ech in their function seruing others need,/I was a Courtier in the Spanish Court" (1). Simultaneously, our soul can be a prisoner not only in the body but in language, as we can see in the conversation between Bel-imperia and Balthazar: "Bal. Your prison then belike is your conceit/Bel. I by conceit my freedome is enthralled" (20). In the second half of the nineteenth century, it is generally said, there occurred the division between a literature essentially housed in language and one for which language has become a prison (Steiner, *After Babel*, 184-5). Hence we can regard that *The Spanish Tragedy*, for Eliot, is a story of incomplete metamorphoses, that of imperfect liberation from two yokes of revenge and language. Naturally, it follows that this scene with an allusion to the tragedy is characterized by Gish's "longing for some form of transformation" and it becomes part of a larger metamorphosis story. *The Waste Land* is the story of metamorphosis as is Bradley's *Appearance and Reality* (needless to say of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*), because both embrace the belief that any finite truth is self-transcendent. This is projected by the line "O Swallow Swallow".

The tragic effect of this scene is more heightened with the introduction of Coriolanus. In Eliot's mind, Coriolanus would be another Ugolino. They together were broken by the conspiracy due to a kind of misunderstanding. Their tragedies commonly have a leitmotif of the lack of communication. The story of Ugolino is based on a historical fact that in 1284, after the defeat of the Pisans by the Genoese at Meloria, Ugolino yielded certain castles to the Florentines and Lucchese. And the story tells that some people misconceived that Ugolino's main motive for the yield was treachery to Pisa. As the result of the (misconceived?) treachery, Ugolino and four of his sons and grandsons were imprisoned.

As for *Coriolanus*, though we cannot get any lesson from the drama, a leading thread is the matter

of words. Throughout *Coriolanus*, names are important: “Coriolanus?/He would not answer to; forbade all names;/He was a kind of nothing, titleless,/Till he had forged himself a name i’th’fire/Of burning Rome” (V.i.11).⁹ But since his attempt to forge the name failed, Coriolanus remains nothing to the last. Of course, his war-oriented life as Mars, which is derived from ‘Martius’ of another name of Coriolanus, also comes to nothing. Paul Prescott gives this description of the question Shakespeare was deeply fascinated by: “the relationship between deed and word, reality and representation, identity and symbol, is acute in one of the most natural and universal of human activities: the giving of names” (Introduction, xl). *Coriolanus* is a quest for the question. Eliot also shows deep interest in it. Naming-objectifying, for him, is the first step to achieve a complete description of reality, though it may subject himself to Coriolanus’ ironical life.

Moreover, if politics, as Prescott argues, is impossible without language and if to dwell with others in a city requires a system of communication on which all can agree, misunderstanding gets Coriolanus into trouble, and rumors and ‘slippery turns’ help to deepen the misunderstanding and to transform friends into enemies (liii). Rumors really killed him, in other words, rumors killed his possibilities which might have been realized. But a broken Coriolanus, in turn, is revived for a moment with aethereal rumours. The theme is further transmitted to the next three lines, too: “The sea was calm, your heart would have responded/Gaily, when invited, bearing obedient/To controlling hands”. Gish says that the lines suggesting the management of a sailboat evoke a memory of what might have been in personal relationships, of other possibilities of human contact and love (99).

On the whole, Coriolanus is a displaced man not only because he is not to live well in the market of shifting value, of bartering, of shared transactions but because “he is fundamentally unhoused” (Prescot, liv), as we can see in the scene which the third serving man asked “Where dwell’st thou” and Coriolanus answered “Under the canopy” (IV. 5.39-40). Coriolanus is banished from Rome for which he fought, killed by the Volscians, enemy of Rome, and finally from the maternal: “Wife, mother, child, I know not” (V. 2.78). In short, he is a displaced man because he cannot be where he would have been. Ironically, Coriolanus destroys himself because he, for his mother’s entreaty, spared the revenge on his hateful Rome. The burning Rome Coriolanus really was not able to see, but instead we may see it on the right panel of the triptych of Bosch’s *The Garden of Earthly Delights*. After all, this scene turns out to reify both “the closing off of possibilities” and “the opening up of possibilities” which Moore poses as the fundamental features of his idea of “metaphysical finitude” (229). Anyhow Coriolanus also can be a failed substitute for the primal father.

And the question of incommensurability between us reappears in the final lines into which Hierony-

mo's "sundrye languages" effect prevails. Here the reader's smooth understanding falters, just as the principle of collage does. The "sundrye languages" effect amplifies each misunderstanding: "Each one of vs must act his parte,/In vnknowne languages,/That it may breede the more varietie" (114). A series of seemingly unrelated fragments acquires a new coherence. As, in *The Spanish Tragedy*, Hieronimo contrives that one part uses Latin and that other parts respectively use Greek, Italian, and French, so here are used Italian, French, Middle English, and Hindu. This, like the Surrealist principle, makes a confusion and serves the purposes of terror (Sontag, 271). This is a Babel-like confusion itself.

I sat upon the shore

Fishing, with the arid plain behind me

Shall I at least set my hands in order ?

London Bridge is falling down falling down falling

down

Poi s'ascose nel foco che gli affina

Quando fiam ceu chelidon — O swallow swallow

Le Prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie

These fragments I have shored against my ruins

Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe.

Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.

Shantih shantih shantih

The passage, beginning with "I sat upon the shore" and ending with "Shantih shantih shantih", as said above, is congested with several images, which makes a climactic ending. The line "I sat upon the shore/Fishing, with the arid plain behind me/Shall I at least set my hands in order ?", depends on the chapter on The Fisher King of Weston's *From Ritual to Romance*. The speaker can be the Fisher King. He vainly endeavors to restore the "significance of the fish as a divine life symbol, associated with Christ as well as more ancient deities connected with the origin and preservation of life" (Gish, 102). The chapter of *From Ritual to Romance* concludes that the Fisher King is the very heart and center of the whole mystery of the Grail legend. The Fish is a Divine Life symbol and at the same time of immemorial antiquity. In any case, Jessie Weston saw the Gospel narrative of the risen Christ in the legends of Adonis, Parcival and Lancelot.

According to Reeves, the phrase "with the arid plain behind me" shifts grammatically from the ret-

respective to the prospective, from looking back to the fishing to looking forward to anticipation” (96). What we have here is the contrast between the futile present and the fertile past. And in the line, we can see what Eliot saw in Charles Whibley — “to fish up from the bottom of the past its forgotten and outmoded cranks and whimsies” (*Essays*, 503). The next image is an example for them. The nursery rhyme fragment — “London Bridge is falling down falling down falling down” — shows not only that London bridge is down but that the narrator sank so low that all means for his salvation were already short. Any attempt to describe a city, as Prescott points out, will always be a tale of many cities. So, Thebe, London, and burning Rome (only a product of Coriolanus’ imagination) are one. In any case, for the narrator, any turning point is needed.

Brooker’s comment is available here. Brooker argues, “Shore is thus a deliberate and striking repetition which makes a difference in the way the entire poem is read. As a noun, shore indicates the margin where land and sea meet, but as a verb, it denotes the effort to set things in order” (202). Moreover, Southam gropes for a couple sources of the image: the words of the prophet Isaiah to King Hezekiah “Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die; and not live (Isaiah xxxviii,1) and the words of Antigone toward Ismene who expresses her fears for Antigone’s life, “Don’t fear for me. Set your own life in order” (63). And the image of “shore”, I think, is deeply involved in the next allusion to Dante.

The line “*Poi s’ascose nel foco che gli affina*” (Then dived he back into that fire which refines them), we can know from Eliot’s own note, is derived from Dante, *Purgatorio*, XXVI.148. In the canto, Dante meets two poets, one of whom is Guido Guinicelli and another the Troubadour Arnaut Daniel who according to Guido passed all in verses of love and prose tales of romance. Their sin is hermaphrodite. But Eliot says, “in their suffering is hope because they wish to suffer (*Essays*, 256). They suffer more actively and more keenly. And the canto points to Dante’s sense of loss after Virgil has gone: “Dante, for that Virgil goeth away, weep not yet, weep not yet, for thou must weep for other sword.” (XXX). Eliot says of the scene, “These are high episodes, to which the reader initiated by the *Inferno* must first cling, until he reaches the shore of Lethe, and Matilda, and the first sight of Beatrice” (*Essays*, 256). In order to cross Lethe, we are once to “shore” or “to refine” ourselves: “God’s high decree would be broken, if Lethe were passed, and such viands were tasted, without some scot of penitence that may shed tears” (XXX, 142-5). At the time, Eliot selected more ordinary or materialistic words “I sat upon the shore/Fishing” than moralistic or religious one, “refine” or “repent”. Here an actual life and abstraction from actual life work together (*Essays*, 111).

The words “Why then Ile fit you, (say no more)” are spoken by Hieronimo when he was asked to

write a court entertainment. This double-edged agreement means both “I’ll give you what you want”, i.e. the parts they play, and “I’ll give you your due”, the dues they must give for their murder of Horatio. Moreover, we know the fact that Hieronimo was or tried to be a poet from his following words: “When I was yong I gaue my minde, /And plide my selfe to fruitless poetrie:/ Which though it profite the professor naught, /yet is it passing pleasing to the world” (109). In the mind of Eliot who recognized in *The Spanish Tragedy* more than the element of Seneca, the story of Philomela could be easily connected with the scene that Hieronimo bites off his own tongue when he, by the Spanish King, is forced to reveal the reason of his undeserved murders and who his confederate is (*Essays*, 82). In a sense, Hieronimo’s action was a result of the antinomy between what he can confide and what he should conceal. Therein Eliot sees the destiny of the poet who, sooner or later, cannot help facing “the inscrutable Reality” (*Appearance and Reality*, 488).

Eliot says in *The Metaphysical Poets*, “poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be *difficult*” (*Essays*, 289). The poet, Eliot continues, must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning (289). For our language, unlike Aufidius’s expressive fit of defeated pride in *Coriolanus* (1.x), no longer articulates, or is relevant to, all major modes of action, thought, and sensibility. And this also indicates that if language is the form of life and the supreme act of community, the collapse of language is synchronous with that of community. Brooker says, “*The Waste Land* is, in a basic way, a lament for lost community” (210). Thus, the confusion the sundry languages produce is that of the twentieth-century world: “the world was filled with broken fragments of systems” (*Essays*, 138). Through such a phase, the poet encounters the impossible Real in which our symbolic universe, i.e., language, institutions, and laws, was shattered.

The Waste Land ends with three thunderous calls, “shantih shantih shantih”, which is a formal ending to an Upanishad. Eliot explained, “‘The peace which passeth understanding’ [Philippians 4: 7] is our equivalent to this word”. In addition, the repetition of the word reminds us of Menenius’ exclamation to all the people who thirst for Coriolanus’ blood: “Peace, peace, peace!” (III.1, 187). And I think that the words can be construed as a warning to the lunacy and barbarism of World War I. Further, the word ‘shantih’ means silence, just as we can see in the phrase “Words, after speech, reach/ Into the silence” (“Burnt Norton”). Reeves points out that the three ‘Shantih’s are an assuaging ritual of sound” (101). They, Reeves further grasps, yearn perhaps for what they do not possess, the meaning which is beyond them.

According to Taylor, poetry can be seen as an event, in the terminology of Badiou, encounter of the

Real. When the Real truly reveals, linguistic fluff is doomed to break. Then, what cannot be heard in the sound of thunder or in the fire, we can hear in the silence. That is, silence would open the new space for our experience and language: “We must be still and still moving/Into another intensity/For a further union, a deeper communion”. In the communion, the parent-child reunion, motif of Shakespeare’s last plays, also would be included. This already is the world of *Four Quartets*.

Notes

1. George Steiner, *Language and Silence* (Faber and Faber, 1967), p. 200.
2. When *The Waste Land* was written, the idea of “the unreality of time” had already been presented by J.M.E. McTaggart on *Mind*, vol.17, 1908. In the article, McTaggart regards Bradley as one of the philosophers who deny the reality of time. Incidentally, though Eliot was much influenced by Bradley, we should not forget that he always sees Bradley through an analytical and mathematical lens of Bertrand Russell.
3. George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of language and translation* (Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 228.
4. A.W. Moore, *The Infinite* (Routledge, 2001), p. 183.
5. Matthew Arnold, *The Complete Poems*, ed. by Kenneth Allott (Longman, 1979), p. 204.
6. Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, tr. by Ray Brassier (Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 63.
7. Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy* (Kessinger Legacy Reprints, <http://www.kessinger.net9>, p. 115.
8. *The Upanishads*, tr. with an introduction by Juan Mascaró (Penguin Books, 1965), p. 127.
9. William Shakespeare, *Coriolanus* (Penguin Books, 2005), p. 112.